

European College of Aquatic Animal Health Policies and Procedures

Version 2022

Table of contents

1.- ECAAH MEMBERSHIP

2.- ECAAH DIPLOMATES

3.- ECAAH ORGANISATIONAL BODIES

4.- ECAAH MEETINGS

5.- MEMBERSHIP FEES

6.- ECAAH & EBVS RELATIONSHIPS

7.- RE-CERTIFICATION

8.- PATHWAYS TO ACCESS EXAMINATION FOR ECAAH CERTIFICATION

9.- AAH RESIDENCY TRAINING PROGRAMMES

10.- APPROVED ECAAH CENTERS FOR RESIDENCY PROGRAMMES

11.- RE-APPROVAL OF ECAAH TRAINING CENTRE

12.- AAH PROGRAMME DIRECTORS AND AAH RESIDENCY SUPERVISORS

13.- RESIDENTS AND RESIDENCIES

14.- ANNUAL RESIDENCY TRAINING PLANS EVALUATION

15.-OTHER ROUTES/TRACKS TO QUALIFY TO SIT THE COLLEGE EXAMINATION

16.- EXAMINATIONS AND DIPLOMAS

17.-EXAMINATIONS

18.- COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

19.- ECAAH QUALITY ASSURANCE

GLOSSARY

ANNEX

APPENDIX

PREFACE

These Policies and Procedures are designed to improve communication and understanding between the members of ECAAH. The Policies section includes the principles, rules and guidelines formulated by ECAAH administration and adopted by the ECAAH membership. The Procedures section describes the specific methods employed to express Policies in the day-to-day operations in the ECAAH, is updated during the year according to the ECAAH needs and verified by the membership at the AGM.

POLICIES OF THE EUROPEAN COLLEGE OF AQUATIC ANIMAL HEALTH (ECAAH)

The ECAAH is one of the recognized veterinary specialist colleges of the European Board for Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS). According to the Constitution (2019), ECAAH is registered at the office in Unit 7b, Oranmore Business Park, Oranmore, Co. Galway, Ireland.

1.- ECAAH MEMBERSHIP

1.1.- Policies for Membership on the ECAAH

1.1.1 Membership and Diplomat definition and policies:

The ECAAH is formed by all the diplomate members up to date with their obligations with the college (ECAAH Constitution, article 4).

All specialists that serve the ECAAH must be of good professional standing and must not have had any complaint or appeal against them (personally) upheld at the respective court of law or professional association.

The ECAAH actively supports gender balance and diversity in its representation.

All ECAAH Diplomates are members of the ECAAH General Assembly (GA) and are represented by this GA. The GA roles are described in Article 1 of the ECAAH Bylaws

Standards for admission to membership:

The ECAAH must only certify veterinarians who meet the educational, training and experience requirements as established by the ECAAH bylaws.

The members of the ECAAH are divided in the following categories according to EBVS and ECAAH Constitutions and bylaws:

- a) Practising Diplomates
- b) Non-practising Diplomates
- c) Retired Diplomates
- d) Honorary Members
- e) Associate Members

2.- ECAAH DIPLOMATES

ECAAH Diplomates are ECAAH members who received a diplomate certification after passing a certification exam, as well as ECAAH founding and de-facto members who were certified during the process of initial establishment of the College (for details, see constitution and bylaws in previous versions). Practising, non-practising or retired categories are related to the current professional status of the member (active, in stand-by, or working in another area or retired). Details on each category can also be found in the College Bylaws).

Practising Diplomates, who actively practice veterinary medicine in aquatic animal health speciality, are entitled to the EBVS title of the European Veterinary Specialist in Aquatic Animal Health. To keep this status, Practising Diplomates should actively practise veterinary medicine in aquatic animals, be periodically re-certified and should be up to date with payment of the College fees.

2.1.- ECAAH Diplomates Advertising and Directory Listings

Practising Diplomates may use the title “**Dip. ECAAH**” or “**Dipl. ECAAH**” or “**Diplomate of ECAAH**”, and if listed as specialists by the EBVS they may use the title “**European Veterinary Specialist in Aquatic Animal Health**”.

2.2.- CATEGORIES

2.2.1.- Non-Practising Diplomates are diplomates that are not actively practising the speciality, no longer re-certified or no longer active in the college (see details in ECAAH bylaws). In this case, Diplomates cannot vote in the GA and are not allowed to use the title European Specialist nor Diplomate but may use the title Non-practising Diplomate. Diplomates that are not actively practising the specialty for more than 2 years are kindly requested to inform the ECAAH. Reversion to Practising Diplomate is possible by through a new re-certification process.

2.2.2.- Retired Diplomates are Diplomates who voluntarily stops permanently and irrevocably practising but can be involved in advisory or assisting in educational activities but cannot vote in the GA. Retired Diplomate are not allowed to use the title European Specialist nor Diplomate but may use the title Retired Diplomate. Diplomates willing to change their status to Retired Diplomates are kindly requested to inform the ECAAH about this situation as soon as possible.

2.2.3.- Honorary member is a status conferred to a person who has made exceptional contributions in the field of aquatic animal medicine and health. Honorary members can be ECAAH Diplomates (and them, have the same rights as the Diplomate category) or non ECAAH Diplomates (and them, have the same rights as the Diplomate category except the right to vote).

Procedures for Honorary Members nomination and approval

A nomination for Honorary Member status requires the proposal of two Diplomates in good standing. To proceed with the nomination, a proposal with information relating to the activities of the nominee in aquatic animal veterinary medicine should be written and forwarded to the ECAAH Secretary. The Executive Committee/Board will evaluate this nomination and the approval should be accomplished by an at least two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee. After this approval, the nomination should be validated by the GA by at least two-thirds majority of the voting members present in person or online at the GA. ECAAH can have up to 5 percent

of its membership composed of Honorary Members. Timing for the expected process: 1 month-1 year (requires final validation by GA).

2.2.4.- Associate members are individuals without *bona fide* veterinary degree who have contributed significantly to aquatic animal health field. Associate members are welcome in the ECAAH due to interdisciplinary nature of aquatic animal health and involvement of high-level para-veterinary professionals with potential to contribute to the ECAAH professional and scientific reputation. Associate Members are not conferred any diplomas and are not entitled to use the designation of Diplomate but may use the title 'Associate Member of the ECAAH', however the use of the title 'Associate Diplomate' or other misleading title is not allowed, under penalty of withdrawing the associate membership status. The title of Associate member can be granted for a maximal period of 5 years. After this time, the contribution of the Associate member should be re-evaluated by the Credentials committee. The criteria for re-evaluation are determined by the College based on the needs of the College and continued reasons for associate membership. Associate members are strongly encouraged to participate in the training of College Residents together with ECAAH Diplomates as well to participate in meetings, workshops, or any other educational activity. Associate Members can act as resident co-supervisors if a Diplomate is also co-responsible for the training programme. Associate Members are not allowed to hold office within the ECAAH or to vote at the Annual General Meeting, but they can be invited to participate in ECAAH committees as advisors. The number of Associate Members shall not be more than 10% of the total number of the college diplomates.

Procedures for Associate Members nomination and approval

Candidates to Associate member can be proposed by any Diplomate to the ECAAH secretary, who will then inform the ECAAH Executive committee. Admission criteria for Associate Members are based on the relevant international scientific professional reputation of the candidate in the field of aquatic animal health, and are similar to qualifications that were necessary for the admission of de-facto diplomates (as described in the ECAAH Bylaws or earlier versions of the Policies and Procedures; specifically, without the requirement for a veterinary degree). The Candidate proposal and the supporting documentation is evaluated by the ECAAH Credentials Committee and recommendation is submitted to the Executive committee for final decision. Expected duration of the process would be approximately one month from the initial proposal.

2.3.- ECAAH DIPLOMATE CERTIFICATION TRACKS

There are different routes that can be followed to become an ECAAH Diplomate.

- 1. Standard Residency training Program + examination**
- 2. Alternative Residency Training Program + examination**
- 3. Modular Training program + examination (approved by EBVS but not developed at this moment in ECAAH)**
- 4. Special cases + examination: This is an exceptional and transitional diplomate track considered in the bylaws of both EBVS and ECAAH.** In this track, only internationally recognised professionals in the field of aquatic animal health that are exceptionally recognised by the Credentials Committee are allowed to have access to examination.

Founding diplomates and de-facto diplomates are no longer considered certification tracks in the ECAAH as these categories are designed only for the purposes of initial formation of the college. Detailed descriptions of these categories can be found in former versions of the ECAAH P&P's.

3- ECAAH ORGANISATIONAL BODIES:

The ECAAH organisational bodies are formed by the Executive Committee and the different committees.

A) ECAAH Executive Committee (ExeC), also referred as ECAAH Board or ECAAH Council

Policies of the ExeC:

The ECAAH ExeC is composed by the following Officers: The President, the Past-President*, the Vice-President**, the Secretary, the Treasurer, as well as other eventually elected board members (even number) (ECAAH Constitution, article 5). The duties of the officers are indicated in the article 3 of the ECAAH Bylaws and are summarised as follows:

President: The President shall preside at the meetings of the College, preserve order, regulate debates, appoint Committees not otherwise provided for, announce results of elections, and perform all other duties legitimately pertaining to his/her office. The president is elected by the ECAAH membership according to election procedures as described in this document, as well as ECAAH Bylaws and Constitution. The maximum term for the President to fill the office is three years with the possibility of one re-election for a maximum duration of six years in the office of the President. Past presidents can stand for re-election after at least one service term has passed after expiration of their role as President and Past President.

Vice-President: The Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President in his/her absence or inability to serve. The Vice-President can stand for elections to the Presidency at the end of the current President's term or succeed to the Presidency if President's office falls vacant for any reason and until the next elections are organized. The vice president is elected by the ECAAH membership according to election procedures as described in this document, as well as ECAAH Bylaws and Constitution.

Secretary: The Secretary shall attend to the correspondence of the ECAAH, keep and publish annually lists of Diplomates of all categories, and Honorary and Associate members, keep minutes of the ECAAH meetings in records which shall be the property of the ECAAH and be accessible at all reasonable times and places, and perform the furthermore usual duties of a Secretary. The Secretary shall submit the Annual Report of the ECAAH to the EBVS by the 15th January of the following year. The minimum term of office of the Secretary shall be 2 years and the maximum 6 years. The Secretary is elected by the ECAAH membership according to election procedures as described in this document, as well as ECAAH Bylaws and Constitution.

Treasurer: The Treasurer shall advise the College on all financial matters. He/she shall arrange for the safekeeping of all funds, pay bills and expenses, and submit a written financial statement to all members annually. He/she shall keep full and accurate books or records of account, containing a record of all monies received and expended, which books/records shall be the property of the College and open to the inspection of the authorised officials at all reasonable times and places. The minimum term of the Treasurer shall be 2 years and the maximum 6 years. The Treasurer is elected by the ECAAH membership according to election procedures as described in this document, as well as ECAAH Bylaws and Constitution.

Past-President: The Past-President will serve in advisory role to the elected President during one election term of three years.

Other elected ExeC members:

Assist the other officers in specific tasks under request.

The total cumulative term of office for ExeC Committee members in different positions cannot exceed 12 years.

ExeC Roles and Responsibilities:

The ExeC shall consider all the business and policies pertaining to the affairs of the College. It shall consider and act upon charges against Diplomates for alleged offences against the Constitution and Bylaws of the College or charges of unprofessional conduct and shall have the authority to recommend the expulsion of a Diplomate for grievous offences. It shall appoint standing Committees, select the time and the place for the ECAAH meetings and determine the fees for application, examinations, registrations, and other fees. It shall direct the management of funds held by the College and the relationships with EBVS.

B) ECAAH advisory Committees:

Six internal advisory committees and one external advisory committee are permanently established in ECAAH. Other ad-hoc or permanent committees can be established at the discretion of the ExeC.

Internal

1. **Education committee**
2. **Examinations committee**
3. **Credentials committee**
4. **Re-certification committee**
5. **Nomination committee**
6. **Appeals committee.**

External**A- External Auditors**

All these committees have an advisory role to the ExeC. The Committees can establish and delegate specific tasks to sub-committees. Committee decisions and recommendations are ultimately validated and approved by the ExeC. Appeals committee is to be activated only if a specific appeal is addressed to the ECAAH.

Committee task descriptions, composition, and members, are determined by the ExeC and members are appointed for minimum of 2 years.

ECAAH advisory Committees policies and procedures**1- Education Committee**

The Education Committee (EduC) shall be composed of at least three members appointed by the Executive Committee for a term of four years. The senior member of the Committee in terms of service shall serve as Chairperson unless the Executive Committee decides otherwise. The Education Committee is responsible for setting criteria for the residency programmes, for approving the programmes and their sponsors, and for monitoring each resident's progress

through the receipt of regular reports. The EduC will maintain lists of approved residency programmes, approved supervisors, and current residents. It will document detailed requirements for residency programmes that are necessary for approval by the College. The EduC will receive the required periodic reports from directors of resident training on the annual progress of each resident, details of each alternate and standard residency programme, in the form of an initial report with update and re-examination every five years (standard programs). The EduC will attest the adequacy of each programme when they approve the report.

2- Credentials Committee

The Credentials Committee (CreC) shall be composed of at least three members appointed by the ExC. The CreC may co-opt ECAAH Diplomates to assist in the process of approving the credentials submitted by the candidates wishing to sit the exams. Such appointments are for one year only, although they may be renewed annually. They must be approved by the Executive Committee. The senior member of the Committee in terms of service shall serve as Chairperson, unless the Executive Committee decides otherwise. The duties of the CreC are to establish guidelines to assist applicants applying to sit the diploma examination; to receive, review, and approve the candidacy of applicants; to forward credentials of approved applicants to the Examination Committee.

3- Examination Committee

The Examination Committee (ExamC) shall consist of at least three members appointed by the Executive Committee. Normally, one member will be replaced each year. The senior member of the Committee in terms of service shall serve as Chairperson unless the Executive Committee decides otherwise. The ExamC may co-opt Diplomates as 'examiners' to assist in the examination process. Such appointments are for one year only, although may be renewed annually. Examiners must be approved by the ExeC.

The ExamC is responsible for the preparation and administration of diploma examinations. Results of examinations shall be forwarded by the Chairperson of the ExamC to the ExeC with recommendations regarding the awarding of diplomas. Normally no member of the Executive Committee or member of the Credentials and Education Committee shall act as an 'examiner'.

4- Re-certification Committee

The Re-certification Committee (RecC) shall consist of a minimum of three members appointed by the Executive Committee for a term of three years. The senior member of the Committee in terms of service shall serve as Chairperson unless the Executive Committee decides otherwise. The RecC shall evaluate the Diplomate status of every Diplomate every five (5) years according to the re-certification requirements accredited by the ECAAH and EBVS.

5- Nomination Committee

The Nomination Committee (NomC) shall be composed of three members appointed by the Executive Committee at least six months before the elections. The NomC shall prepare a list of candidates for the election to the ExeC after a written call for candidates to all the Diplomates at least five months before the elections and will report to the ExeC at least three months before the elections. The NomC shall select at least one nominated candidate for each position and communicate the names to the Executive Committee. The list of nominees should be known by the Diplomates 30 days before the elections. The Committee will report their considerations to

the College at the GA. If no nominations have been made, nominations may be made from the floor.

Auditors

Two auditors are elected by the General Assembly at the Annual General Meeting for one-year term. The Treasurer's report regarding the financial status of the College, will be presented for approval at the AGM and the two auditors will audit and finally validate the approved report. If necessary, the College may appoint external professional auditors.

4.- ECAAH MEETINGS

General Assembly (Annual General Meeting)

Definition:

The GA is the senior legislative body of the College and has the following duties:

- a) To review and approve ECAAH Constitution, Bylaws, and Policies and Procedures and their respective updates. Changes/updates in the Constitution and the Bylaws are subject to approval with majority (simple or 2/3) vote of the ECAAH membership as described in these documents. ExeC recommendations on updates in Policies and Procedures document are subject to approval by the GA with a simple majority vote of the present members (in person or online).
- b) To elect the Board / Executive Committee Officers and Auditors.
- c) Action on the auditors' report.
- d) Formal approval of the business conducted by the Executive Committee during the preceding year.
- e) Action on business, presented by the Executive Committee or as required by the Constitution.
- f) Approve membership dues for the forthcoming year(s).

General Assembly policies:

Membership of the GA:

All the ECAAH diplomates are members of the GA, and it is the duty of every practising Diplomate to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM) at least once every three years. If the Diplomate has not attended any AGM for three consecutive years without previous dispensation from the Executive Committee, the registration as practising Diplomate ceases by default. ECAAH Secretary keeps the attendance record and informs the Diplomates about their duty status.

GA procedures:

The ECAAH holds one General Assembly (GA) per year as face-to-face, online, or as a hybrid meeting (i.e., physically plus broadcasting online). The dates of the GA for the next year and the location(s) are fixed by the ExeC and are announced in advance. The preliminary agenda and relevant documentation for the GA is generated by the Board and distributed to the diplomate members by the secretariat. Diplomate members may submit topics to be included on the agenda.

GA expenses: any travel expenses of the diplomate members associated to the attendance to the GA are at her/his own responsibility. Other expenses, such as the cost of meeting rooms will be covered by the ECAAH. Expenses from the ExeC members (travel, accommodation) can be covered after previous justification and approval of the ExeC.

Minutes: draft minutes of a GA will be electronically distributed to all College members after the meeting. Any comment to the minutes should be sent to the Secretary. Final approval of the minutes will be done in the following GA.

5.- MEMBERSHIP FEES

Policies and procedures for Fees

ECAAH collects fees for the purpose of maintaining the financial integrity of the College, including supporting EBVS membership cost, costs of ECAAH administration (bank account, web site, examinations, documents preparation and third-party audits) and membership services (annual general meeting expenses, educational program development), as well as other expenses as determined by the ExeC.

The payment of the fees is done exclusively via bank transfer (SEPA or similar) at the following ECAAH bank account, with all transfer charges (when applicable) set as the payee responsibility (not ECAAH):

Account name: ECAAH
Bank: Bank of Ireland, Oranmore, Co. Galway, Ireland
IBAN: IE65 BOFI 904034 93273605
BIC: BOFIE2D
Branch code: 90-40-42
Account number: 93273605
Reason for payment: as applicable

The collected fees currently fall into the following categories (ExeC can change or add new categories of fees as deemed appropriate and economically justified, pending final approval at the annual GA):

Annual fees for Diplomates

Each ECAAH member in diplomate and diplomate in training (resident) status must pay annual membership fee in the amount determined by the ExeC. Fees are based on calendar year charges and are due by the 1st of March of the current year. New members should pay the current year fee as soon as possible, but no later than 2 weeks after formal acceptance to the ECAAH as confirmed by the approval of the ExeC and receiving official admittance letter from the Secretary. Residents who have already paid annual fees for the calendar year during which they have passed the qualifying exam and fulfilled all criteria for achievement of the diplomate status, do not have to pay additional membership fees.

Current (2022-2023) ECAAH membership fee is set to 150 EUR.

Residency application fees

Individuals who apply for admission to be accepted in the ECAAH residency program must pay the Residency application fee as part of the application procedure. Proof of payment is required as part of the application documentation.

Current (2022-2023) ECAAH residency program application fee is set to 300 EUR.

Examination fees

Individuals who achieve the right to undertake ECAAH diplomate qualifying exam via any of the available routes, and wish to register for the examination, must pay the Examination fee as part

of the examination registration procedure. Proof of payment is required as part of the registration documentation.

Current (2022-2023) ECAAH Examination fee is set to 300 EUR.

Re-exam fees

In case a repeated examination must be taken, Re-examination fees must be paid as part of re-examination procedure with proof of payment required as part of the re-examination documentation.

Current (2022-2023) ECAAH Re-examination fee is set to 150 EUR.

Appeal fees

Individuals who submit an appeal to ECAAH are required to pay initial appeal processing administrative fee as part of the appeal procedure. The proof of payment of this initial fee is required as part of the appeal documentation. However, depending on the nature of the appeal and possible additional expenses, ECAAH reserves the right to impose additional fees to be determined on case-by-case basis by the Appeals committee, reviewed and approved by ExeC.

Current (2022-2023) ECAAH initial appeal administrative processing fee is set to 300 EUR.

International recognition fees

Individuals who request to be recognized by ECAAH based on their international experience (as described in detail in other ECAAH documents) must pay the administrative fee as part of the recognition request procedure. Proof of payment is required as part of the recognition request documentation.

Current (2022-2023) international recognition administrative fee is set to 500 EUR.

Other fees

The ECAAH reserves the right to determine the level and apply other fees to cover the potential cost of administrative procedures related to any situations that may occur during ECAAH business. Such fees will be determined by respective committees, and reviewed and approved by ExeC, and the responsible party will be informed about the reason and the amount of such fees at least two weeks prior to any action related to formal recognition of the responsible party request to ECAAH.

6.- ECAAH & EBVS RELATIONSHIPS

Harmonization between ECAAH and EBVS documents

The Constitution, Bylaws and Policies and Procedures of the ECAAH must comply with the EBVS as parent organization. Therefore, any changes, if/when applicable, in the Constitution, Bylaws and Policies and Procedures of the EBVS will be reciprocally reflected in changes, updates or amends in the corresponding ECAAH regulations, subjected to verification and approval of the ExeC and GA. The respective changes will be implemented in ECAAH documents as soon as possible, and no later than 24 months after formal adoption in the EBVS.

Policies on ECAAH reporting to EBVS.

An annual report and a five-year report will be submitted to EBVS.

Annual reports

ECAAH will submit an annual report to the EBVS. This report will include updated statistical data about the state of the college and will inform about potential issues and emerging problems detected during the last year. This report will follow EBVS recommendations indicated in EBVS P&P's section B.1.1. Procedures for Annual Reports.

Five-year detailed reports

Every 5 years ECAAH will submit to ECAAH a detailed report of its status and activities. During 2022 ECAAH must submit the information and documents required for the assessment of its full recognition. This report will follow EBVS recommendations indicated in EBVS P&P's section B.1.2. Procedures for five-year detailed report.

Policies on Diplomates of non-EBVS Recognised Colleges

The ECAAH may temporarily grant the Diplomate status to an applicant, providing that the applicant can meet the following minimum conditions:

1. Has education, training, and publications credentials in the disciplines equal to those required to sit the examination of ECAAH.
2. Has passed an examination of equal rigor and covering the same content to that of the Diplomate of ECAAH.
3. Passes the ECAAH re-certification process.
4. Is practising in a European country, as defined by the Council of Europe, and intends to remain so for the foreseeable future. Applicants may be relieved of this requirement upon formal request to be reviewed and evaluated by the ExeC on case-by-case basis.

According to EBVS P&P's (B.2. Procedures for Diplomates of non-EBVS Recognised Colleges), a Diploma which is awarded to a Diplomate of a non-EBVS recognised College without sitting the College's examination is not valid when the conditions under which the Diploma was awarded do not exist anymore.

7.- RE-CERTIFICATION

Policies on Re-certification of Diplomates

Diplomates of the ECAAH must be evaluated every 5 years for re-certification. The College is responsible for establishing a standard procedure in which the prerequisites for recertification of the diplomates are described.

According to EBVS rules, each College has its own responsibility in creating a 100-credit point system for re-certification of their diplomates. The system must be sent to and approved by the EBVS Board. The credits can be obtained by participation in research, educational, or service activities and points must be collected in at least two of these three categories. The EBVS only recognises scientific, evidence-based veterinary medicine, which complies with animal welfare legislation. Specialists or Colleges who/which practice or support implausible treatment modalities with no proof of effectiveness run the risk of withdrawal of their specialist status. No credit points can be granted for education or training in these so-called supplementary, complementary and alternative treatment modalities.

The requirements to remain certified are:

1. Practice: to practise their speciality for 60% of their time, with a minimum of 24 hours per week (based on a normal working week of 40 hours) over the past five years.
2. Activity: to show a satisfying degree of activity during the last 5 years to keep level of competences at a specialist level.
3. AGM: to have attended the Annual General Meeting of the College, at least twice in 5 years, unless previous dispensation from the College has been granted.
4. Reference letters: provide two letters of reference attesting the professional ethics and activity of the diplomate during the five years period.
5. The assessment of the requirements is based in a 100-credit point system and the credits can be obtained by participation in research, educational, or service activities and points must be collected in at least two of these three categories. Only recognised scientific, evidence-based veterinary medicine compliant with animal welfare legislation will be considered. The documents used for this assessment is included as annex to the P&P.
6. Extensions: extensions of the 5-year period must be granted for maternity & paternity leave, serious health issues and/or exceptional circumstances.
7. Failure to recertify: according to EBVS P&P's, if they do not meet the requirements above, or if for any other reason a diplomate does not re-certify, they will be removed from the EBVS specialist register, and may use the title of 'Diplomate', but not the title of "EBVS® European Specialist in Veterinary ...". A non-certified diplomate is not allowed to act as programme director or supervisor.
7. Reverting to certified: A non-certified diplomate seeking to revert to certified diplomate status needs to satisfy the requirements for certification. Additionally, a fee can be required by the College for re-certification.

Procedures for Re-certification of Diplomates

ECAAH Secretary will inform Diplomates requiring re-certification 6-12 months before the end of the 5 years after the first certification or the previous re-certification.

Diplomates requiring re-certification should fill the corresponding form available through the website or under request to the ECAAH Secretary. This form is based in the categories for re-certification requested by EBVS and the 100-credit point system to facilitate the evaluation.

This form should be filled, signed, and returned to the ECAAH Secretary that will submit this document to the Re-certification Committee. Each form will be evaluated, and a decision should be taken in 2 months period. The results of this evaluation will be presented to the ExeC and ExeC will then proceed with the final approval in the case of a positive evaluation. The final decision will be communicated to the applying diplomate.

After re-evaluation, the successful diplomates may be registered for another five years in the EBVS Directory.

8.- PATHWAYS TO ACCESS EXAMINATION FOR ECAAH CERTIFICATION

According to ECAAH and EBVS Bylaws, Policies and Procedures, different tracks are established to sit for the ECAAH examination:

RESIDENCY TRAINING PROGRAMME (Standard or Alternative)

This is the main and recommended track.

- INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED SPECIALISTS TRACK

This is a track only for exceptional cases.

- MODULAR ROUTE TO SPECIALISATION

This is a new potential route to specialisation recognised by EBVS but still not taken up by ECAAH.

Internationally recognised specialist and modular routes are described in other sections of this document.

9.- AAH RESIDENCY TRAINING PROGRAMMES

Aims: Residency Training Programmes should aim at training/educating specialists who will have the knowledge, skills, and competences necessary to successfully practise the speciality. Moreover, residency programmes must aim at the development of a culture that recognizes the importance of continuous professional development.

All Residency Training Programs must be approved by the Education Committee before beginning Resident training. ECAAH Residencies can start after acceptance of the Resident in the program and after Program Director agreement.

Approval: ECAAH is responsible of the assessment through the accreditation committee and approval by the Board, of residency programmes (standard, alternate or other tracks) submitted to the college.

Extensions: In case of parental leave or illness, a prolongation/extension has to be granted by the Credentials/Education committee in accordance with national/EU regulations. The Credentials/Education committee may also grant a prolongation for other circumstances.

Definitions

Two types of Residency Training programs are established in the ECAAH:

- A) Standard Residency Training Programs
- B) Alternate Residency Training Programs

Policies for Standard Residency Training Program:

These programs are the basis for the resident training programs.

A Residency Training Program requires an approved Residency Training Centre, an approved Residency Training Plan including details of supervisors and an approved Program Director. The Program Director must be a Diplomate of the ECAAH.

The internship together within the Residency Training Program should comprise a minimum total time-period of three (3) years (+ one previous internship). This is the shortest route to qualify for the ECAAH examination.

The period can be taken consecutively. The Education Committee can allow the training to take place on a part time basis as long as the total time is equivalent to at least four years, and that total training time does not exceed six years.

More specifically:

A previous one-year (minimum) internship or equivalent is mandatory and composed of a broad range of clinical assignments within one of the major divisions of veterinary medicine. This first period must be an internship in a wide area of veterinary activity beyond the professional degree and should be associated with aquatic medicine or general veterinary medicine. Internships can be included as a part of the whole program or equivalent activities (e.g., a previous master's degree held by the resident) can be validated by the ECAAH Education Committee.

A second period shall comprise at least three (3) years following the standard Residency Training Program. The residents must spend at least 60% of 3 years working in the practice of his/her speciality, under the direct supervision of a Diplomate of the College.

At the end of the Residency Training program, and after the approval of the supervisor, the Program Director will issue a certification/statement that the candidate has satisfactorily completed the approved time of training.

The Program Director requesting the approval must be a practising ECAAH Diplomate, responsible for the Resident's program, and can be the central supervisor. He/she defines the details and structures within the framework of the approved program. The program of the Resident(s) has an educational role, and provides supervision for research projects, case log and case reports. The Program Director is responsible for the official communication to the ECAAH regarding the Standard Residency Programme and the Resident(s). He/she submits the form annually as well as the final recommendation letter.

The maximum number of Residents that can be trained at a time in a training centre is two per Diplomate.

Any changes in the structure of the program or in Diplomates working at the institution must be notified as soon as they happen to the Secretary of the College.

Procedures for Application, Evaluation and register of ECAAH Standard Training Program

The protocols used in the ECAAH for resident training programs is as follows:

1. Self-evaluation report: The ECAAH secretary receives electronically a report of self-evaluation based on an APPLICATION FOR NEW STANDARD TRAINING PROGRAM form signed by the residency programme director. This report will state the objectives of the residency and describe how the programme meets those objectives and the standards established by the ECAAH. Once received, the secretary informs the ExeC, and this report is sent to the EduC.
2. Review of self-evaluation: The EduC will review the self-evaluation report submitted. Each member of the committee will report in writing to the chairperson of the committee any deficiency found in the report.
3. Feedback on self-evaluation: The Chairperson of the EduC, if necessary, will write to the director of the residency programme, requesting clarification of any points that are unclear and further information on any apparent deficiencies. If there are issues that remain, he/she will contact the responsible person of the institution within which the residency programme is being conducted, with a copy to the director of the residency programme.
4. Decision: The EduC will meet and consider all the available information about the residency programme and develop a recommendation for action by the College. The ECAAH ExeC will approve or reject the residency. If approved, the Centre will finally be designated as an Approved Training Centre (together with the Satellite centres, if any) can start to run Standard Residencies.

Timing: All this process should be done in less than 3 months since the submission of the report.

Standard Resident Training Program approval is granted for a five-year period, and re-approval is necessary every five years thereafter.

Policies for Alternate Residency Training Programs

A veterinarian whose circumstances do not permit enrolment in a standard residency programme may submit an alternate programme to the ECAAH, in conjunction with his/her supervisor, outlining the resources available to them, for advanced study and experience. The EduC can allow training to take place on a part-time basis (alternate programme) as long as the total time of supervised training is equivalent to at least 3 years and the total time of the alternate programme does not exceed 6 years. The alternate programme is not approved for anyone other than the (aspiring) resident in question. The alternate programme is designed by a program director/supervisor (college diplomate) specifically for the future resident and cannot be approved for anyone other than the resident in question. The alternate programme should be submitted to the ECAAH and must be validated by the Education Committee of ECAAH before the Resident embarks on it. The total length of this programme cannot be shorter than the standard residency programme. The precise form of each individual programme is at the discretion of the Education Committee. The total time of an alternate programme must not exceed six years. A resident on an alternate training programme must spend the equivalent of at least 60% of 3 years working in the practice of his/her speciality.

At the end of the Alternate Residency Training program, the Program Director will issue a certification/statement that the candidate has satisfactorily completed the approved time of training.

Procedures for Alternate Residency Training Programs

See section on Residents and Residencies. This procedure will require filling and signing an APPLICATION FOR NEW ALTERNATE TRAINING PROGRAM form.

10.- APPROVED ECAAH CENTRES FOR RESIDENCY PROGRAMMES

Definition and policies of Approved Centres (Standard Centres and Satellite Centres)

An ECAAH Approved Centre is an institution, centre or facility willing to host an approved AAH Residency training program. Approved Centres can be **Standard Centres** (Full residency programs can be developed there) or **Satellite Centres** (residency programs can be developed only partially there). Approved full standard training centres will enable the Residents to gain familiarity with Aquatic animal health of a wide range of species. Approved partial satellite training centres are involved in the training of Residents in a limited number of type of species or in a limited speciality or to specific aspects of aquatic animal health (e.g., only molluscs or only image diagnostics).

Approval of a Satellite training centre applies only for the species/specialities mentioned in the form and does not allow running a standard residency program.

Residents on a standard residency program based elsewhere and under a Program Director or supervisor recommendation are allowed to visit Satellite training centres without seeking prior approval of the EduC. In the event of Residents on an alternative program visiting that centre, approval by EduC is necessary prior to the visit by submission of a request.

Each approved centre will have a Centre Representative / supervisor. The Centre Supervisor must be a practising ECAAH Diplomate. These representatives / supervisors, together with the Program Directors, will be responsible to the ECAAH for the smooth running of the Residency program (according to the content of the program itself, facilities, rotations, etc) in the Centre for which the approval is requested. They will be responsible for sending the documents requested for approval/re-approval of the centre and/or the program to the ECAAH, and for communicating any modification of the program to the Credentials and Education Committees.

Procedures for application to register as approved ECAAH Training Centre

ECAAH Diplomates/ centres seeking full (standard approved centre) or partial (satellite centre) approval of their institution or facilities to become a Resident training centre must provide satisfactory evidence proving that they offer sufficient facilities and certified resident supervisors and a program that fulfils the necessary criteria for approval as a training centre offering a standard residency training program. Facilities for AAH Residency Training programmes should have enough quality standards. It is very important to include in the ACR form and enclosed documents, any relevant information about these facilities, as well any certifications that can be useful for the CreC and EduC to assess the quality of the centre and its facilities.

To do that, the Training centre acceptance form should be completed, signed by the diplomate responsible/supervisor of the centre and sent to the ECAAH Secretary, that will distribute to CreC and EduC for evaluation. After the evaluation of both committees, the decision will be sent to the ExeC for final approval, where appropriate and communication to the centre supervisor.

Timing: All these processes should be done in less than 3 months since the submission of the report.

Approved centres are granted for a five-year period, and re-approval is necessary every five years thereafter.

11.- RE-APPROVAL OF ECAAH TRAINING CENTRE

Policies

Re-approval of training centres and programs is necessary every five (5) years. Approval applies to the program at the named institution and if it is supervised by the named Centre supervisor. Any changes in the structure of the program or in Diplomates working at the institution must be notified as soon as they happen to the Secretary of the ECAAH and to the CreC and EduC

Procedures

Centres to be re-approved will send to the ECAAH Secretary a letter signed by the Diplomate responsible/supervisor of the centre indicating the changes (if any) in the structure of the program, Diplomates involved in the program or relevant changes in the facilities (if any) from the dossier sent for the initial approval. This document will be sent to the CreC and EduC for evaluation. The result of this evaluation will be sent to the ExeC to final approval. The Centre supervisor should be informed by this decision in less than one month before the submission of the letter.

12.- AAH PROGRAMME DIRECTORS AND AAH RESIDENCY SUPERVISORS

Policies for AAH programme directors and residency supervisors

The Program Director must be a Diplomate and shall be responsible for the administration and continuity of the Program.

Each AAH Resident must be supervised by at least one (1) Diplomate and one Diplomate may train up to three (3) residents concurrently.

Daily based supervision is required, although it does permit the intermittent absence of the supervising Diplomate or the resident for vacations, meetings, days off, etc. Supervision must include consultations, case discussions, and case management with actual cases. Daily supervision can be performed by the Program Director or by ECAAH diplomate supervisor.

A Program Director must be an ECAAH Diplomate. Any ECAAH diplomate specialist may be director or supervisor of a residency programme. A supervisor shall have no more than 2 residents following standard residency programmes. However, in exceptional cases and after approval by the college, up to 3 residents can be supervised by the same supervisor.

Specialists in aquatic animal health from The American Board of Veterinary Specialisation ABVS specialists: ABVS specialists may be programme director or supervisor of a European Residency programme, subject to approval by the Committee of the EBVS College responsible for the approval of the College's residency programmes, approves his/her curriculum vitae. A contribution to the discipline in terms of scientific output (publications, presentations, etc) is essential, and the ABVS specialist must pass the EBVS College's re-certification process. During the five-year evaluation process of the training programme, the role of this director or supervisor will be re-evaluated.

Non-EBVS/ABVS Recognised Specialists: in circumstances where there are insufficient European specialists, a non-EBVS/ABVS recognised specialist may co-supervise a European Residency programme under the condition that the Committee of the College responsible for the residency programmes approves his/her curriculum vitae. In the case of ECAAH and particularly in activities such as aquaculture and in some aquatic animal species, molluscs, and crustaceans some activities related to aquatic animal health are shared by non-veterinarian specialists as biologists or other professionals. In these cases, ECAAH Associate Members are encouraged to co-supervise residents following ECAAH programs.

The minimal requirements for co-supervision will be that:

1. The person's training and expertise in the area in which they are supervising is equivalent to an EBVS-recognised specialist.
2. The person demonstrates a significant scientific output (publications, presentations, etc equivalent to an EBVS-recognised specialist.
3. The person passes the College's certification process.
4. The programme is supervised by an EBVS or ABVS-recognised specialist.
5. During the five-year evaluation process of the training programme, the role of this supervisor will be evaluated.

AAH Residency Program director duties:

The Program Director is responsible for the administration and continuity of the program and is responsible for oversight of all aspects of the Residency Training Programme, including: designing and implementing the Residency Training Plan; coordinating all clinical and educational aspects of the Residency, Training Program; ensuring timely completion of administrative tasks and for all communication with the ECAAH; communicating and giving feedback to the Resident regularly to support him/her in making adequate progress in the program for example by reviewing the Resident's Experience and Skills Log and reviewing and critiquing.

Training Benchmark assignments with the Resident:

Program Directors must be legally authorized and permitted by the Residency Training Facility to practice in the facility where supervision will take place. A Program Director must be available to the Resident on a continual basis and is ultimately responsible for the quality of the clinical and educational functions of the Residency. This includes the quality of supervision by other Diplomates within the Residency Training Plan, working with a Program Director until they sit the Certifying Examination.

13.- RESIDENTS AND RESIDENCIES

Policies and requirements for entry into a ECAAH Residency Program:

To be accepted as a Resident by ECAAH, the following requirements must be fulfilled.

An Applicant for registration as an ECAAH resident must:

- a) have graduated from a college of veterinary medicine from a EAEVE approved School and be legally able to practice veterinary medicine and surgery in a European country, unless relieved of this obligation by the Executive Committee.
- b) have completed a first period of at least one (1) year of internship in a wide area of veterinary activity associated with aquatic medicine or general veterinary practice, or its equivalent including relative post graduate academic programs (Master's degree, PhD program or equivalent graduate program). The ECAAH Education Committee may verify their ability to comply with all requirements.
- c) Applicants may apply directly to a Standard Residency Training Program that has already been approved (see procedures for details). If accepted, residents should be registered by their Program Director with the ECAAH Secretary prior to, or no later than one month after, the official start of their standard training program.
- d) Applicants for Alternate Residency program may approach a suitable Program Director and work with them to create an Alternate Residency Training Plan that is achievable by both Program Director and Applicant. Specific program and resident application should be sent to ECAAH for validation by the EduC in a similar way as Standard Programs. No Applicant can be accepted as a Resident (in the Alternate way) until her/his specific program is approved.

The two main critical components of a Residency Training Program are:

- A. A Program Director must be an ECAAH Diplomate and is responsible for identifying appropriate mentorship for each Resident.
- B. An approved Residency Training program (for Standard programs) or a customised plan (for Alternate programs) that should be approved (in this case specifying how the requirements listed in this document are to be met).

Resident responsibilities

The degree of responsibility assumed by the Resident shall be appropriate to the nature of Aquatic Animal medical procedure and training experience. The Resident on an AAH service shall be responsible for:

- a) Receiving data and history from clients
- b) Supervising daily management of laboratory kept animals.
- c) Participation in clinical /laboratory teaching
- d) Providing optimal clinical service and prompt professional communications.

While a minimum case load is necessary to develop clinical experience, the candidate must also be provided with sufficient time to evaluate patients properly, to study, and to participate in rounds, workshops, work with other Board-Certified Specialists and to lecture.

Procedures for entry and registration into an ECAAH Standard Residency Program

Registration of a New Resident

The Applicant simply should contact the Program Director and ask for acceptance. The Director of the program can ask for documentation if necessary and should check if the applicant fulfils all the requirements indicated in the policies and can accept or not the applicant onto the Residents program. If accepted, the applicant should send the 'registration form for residents' signed by the Program director to the ECAAH Secretary and pay the corresponding Registration Fee. The ECAAH Secretary will check the payment with the Treasurer and send the document to the EduC, within 30 days of an applicant's registration, the EduC will acknowledge the start of the new Resident, ask for further information, or refuse. The Education Committee will notify the decision to the ECAAH ExeC and the CreC and if positive, the ExeC will approve the newly registered Resident. The new resident will be informed of the approval.

Applicants not accepted by the Education Committee may appeal the decision to the ECAAH Executive Committee according to the Appeal rules indicated in this document.

Policies for Residency Training Plans supervision

The Residency training will be composed by a broad orientation in aquatic animal health & medicine.

This can be realized through a training period equivalent to approximately 100 clinical weeks under the supervision of ECAAH Diplomates where training in approved training centres and recognised institutions, diagnostic laboratory or similar institutions that provides a broad range of assignments in a variety of fields (microbiology, parasitology, histopathology, immunology, virology, molecular biology, genetics). This includes a recommended 35 % training in industry related to aquatic animals (training in aquacultural species, ornamental species and aquaria is required). Another 40% of training in aspects related to public health, food hygiene, pathology, epidemiology, pharmacology, anaesthesia, radiology, management of fish /aquatic animal farms, advanced fish production technology/husbandry is recommended. It is recommended that approximately 25% of the time during the residency training should be reserved for independent study or practice, lectures, and lab teaching, including attendance of courses, seminars, technical sessions, and conferences and continuing professional development (Continuing education programs as the sole method of training will not meet the requirements of certification as a Diplomate). It is expected that these weeks will allow the Resident to be exposed to relevant knowledge and complete the skills and experience list. The resident is also expected to complete training benchmarks.

It is recommended that at least 60% of the time of the residency must be allocated to clinical / laboratory / practical case responsibility.

The specific profiles of the AAH Residency Programs are presented in ANNEX 1

Supervision is defined as the Resident and Supervisor participating in mainly practical work in a Residency Training Facility, in which both the Supervisor and the Resident are on duty and concurrently managing cases. The Supervisor must be licensed and authorized to practice in the facility where supervision takes place.

The Diplomate supervisor must provide frequent consultation, and in-depth case review of those activities and cases which can contribute to the progress of the Resident's academic and clinical education. The Resident must have a significant role in the activity or case management. Program Directors are responsible to supervise these activities to meet the needs of individual Residents and to complement the training and experience undertaken during the weeks.

Training documentation & portfolio for Annual Reports

Residents are encouraged to collect evidence of her/his training and keep a portfolio with this information. Documentation (RESIDENT ANNUAL REPORT TEMPLATE) that the Resident has fulfilled the Teaching Requirements will include a signed statement from the Program Director/Supervisor. At their discretion, the EduC or CerC may request additional documentation including handouts, calendars, and copies of presentations for clarification.

Annual Report should reflect the progress of the residents. Training benchmarks are tasks assigned by the EduC designed to verify and reinforce the knowledge and/or skills of a Resident. Training benchmarks ensure regular and continuous progress toward completion of the Training Program, preparation for examination, and provide Residents and Program Directors examples of the depth and breadth of information pertinent to our Specialty.

As a reference, approximately 100 different case logs related to different aspects of aquatic animal health, 2 complete mock exams and 2 publishable case reports can be considered a good training reference for the whole residency period.

A Resident is considered to be inactive when, by choice or by action, they are not making satisfactory progress toward completion of Residency Requirements. If it is determined that a Resident is not making satisfactory progress in the completion of their Requirements or if a Resident fails to meet deadlines or other reporting requirements, the CreC can place that Resident on inactive status. A Resident may choose to be placed on inactive status by applying to and receiving approval from the CreC. The length of time that a Resident can be inactive is limited by the requirement that a Residency must be completed, and Credentials submitted for the Certifying Examination within six (6) years of beginning their Residency. To be reinstated to active status, Residents must apply in writing to the Credentials Committee. The Credentials Committee will determine which requirements must be fulfilled for reinstatement. These will depend on the circumstances under which the Resident was placed on inactive status.

At the end of the residency training programme and after fulfilling the requirements of time and accomplishment of the contents of the programme, the Director of the Residency Programme and Resident supervisors will check the readiness of the Resident to sit the college exams. In positive cases, they will issue the corresponding document to be sent to the CerC for college approval before the Resident can sit the College exams.

14.- ANNUAL RESIDENCY TRAINING PLANS EVALUATION

Procedures for Annual Evaluation of Standard and Alternative Residency Training Plans

Residents:

Every year (November), Residents should send a RESIDENT ANNUAL REPORT to the EduC with information about the activities signed by the Resident Supervisor and the Program Director (for Standard programmes) or only by the Alternative Program Supervisor (for Alternative programmes). In a period of 90 days, EduC will send to each resident an assessment/benchmark about the annual report.

Residency Training Plans

Approved Residency Training Programs (standard and alternative) are required to submit an Annual Update to the EduC in November. The Annual Update must list any deficiencies relating to the Residency Training Program or changes from the original Program Application. The Annual Update must also include changes that required immediate reporting that occurred during the preceding year. In a period of 90 days, EduC will send to each program an assessment/benchmark about the annual report.

Annual evaluations are informative. If there are not major issues that should be discussed with ExeC, they do not need to be approved.

Changes to the Residency Training Program

The Program Director is responsible for immediately reporting any major changes in the Residency Training Program. These include:

- loss or change of a Program Director.
- significant changes to the Residency Training Plan.
- change to the location of the Training Facility(ies).
- changes to the standards of the pre-approved Training Facility(ies).
- any major interruption to the progress of a Resident.

The EduC must be notified as soon as any potential changes to the Residency Training Plan or Facility are identified. All changes to the Residency Training Plan must also be documented in the Annual Updates. A Residency Training Program may be placed on probationary status until the changes (and any proposed remedies) can be reviewed by the Education Committee. The Education Committee reserves the right to request reapplication for any Residency Training Program if changes are identified that might result in failure of the program to meet the minimum standards. Questions regarding the significance and implication of program changes should be directed to the EduC.

15.-OTHER ROUTES/TRACKS TO QUALIFY TO SIT THE COLLEGE EXAMINATION

15.1.-INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED SPECIALISTS TRACK:

Application to take an ECAAH examination without having previously undertaken an approved residency:

The applicant must provide evidence that they are equivalent to, or exceed, the standard of a candidate that has been approved to sit the College's examination after undergoing an approved residency. To demonstrate this, the following information must be submitted to the ECAAH.

1. Curriculum vitae - to cover entire professional career (university onwards)
2. Published papers: a complete and detailed list should be included within the CV.

Once received, the quality of the papers shall be evaluated by members of the ECAAH Credentials Committee. Particularly, at least 10 peer reviewed international journals papers should relate to the speciality of aquatic animal health and have been published within the preceding 7 years. If these 10 papers are in a language other than English, an English translation, performed by the applicant, should be provided (if at least 10 papers are in English, any additional papers in another language do not need to be translated). Where papers are multi-author papers and the applicant is not first/corresponding author, the applicant's role in the study should be explained.

3. Case reports (2) - required as an assessment of complex case management. These must describe cases managed by the applicant in the last 5 years. Published case reports are acceptable.

4. Case log (100 cases): Cases must be of a complexity and type like that which would be expected of a resident to gain satisfactory approval by the credentials committee. They must be cases managed by the applicant during the last 5 years.

5. Evidence of any relevant postgraduate qualification in a related field should be submitted.

6. A covering letter should be provided (3-5 pages) in support of their application. This should include the following.

- career highlights,

- relevant experience (scholarly, clinical, legal, political),

- contributions to the speciality (education, research) - applicant to select 5 most significant contributions to the aquatic animal health with a brief statement of impact (< 250 words each) supporting each contribution. Contributions may be research (single paper or group of related papers, or a systematic review), teaching (at national or international level) or service (e.g., contribution to a national or international organisation which could be governmental, or multinational).

- applicants should explain what they will bring to the membership of the ECAAH and how they intend to contribute to the development of the speciality, for instance through resident training.

7. Applicants should not have followed an approved residency programme

8. Applicants must demonstrate that they have spent a minimum of 60% of their time working in the speciality of aquatic animal health during the last 10 years

9. The applicant should be working in a setting that provides access to facilities of a sufficient standard to allow the practice of the speciality at an appropriate level.

10. Applicant must submit a list of suggested up to five referees, from which a minimum of three references will be sought. Where possible at least two of these referees should be existing diplomates of speciality colleges.

Referees will be requested to comment specifically on the applicant's professional, ethical and legal conduct, clinical abilities, and contribution to the veterinary speciality.

11. Letters of good standing from all licensing bodies with which applicant is licensed to practise

12. Applicants from outside Europe will be considered

Procedures to apply for a special international recognised specialist:

The applicant must contact the ECAAH secretary and send a letter and documents with all the information indicated in the policies. The applicant should also pay the corresponding application fees for International recognised specialist evaluation. The Secretary will inform ExeC and will send the information to the CreC. The CreC will check the information given in the documents and if necessary, may request to the applicant further information. The CreC will evaluate the fulfilment of the requirements indicated in the policies section and will send the decision to the ExeC, that will approve or not the application and will notify the final decision to the applicant. Positive evaluation will allow the applicant to sit examination in the next examination issue. In case of negative evaluation, the applicant asks the secretary for details of the CreC and ExeC about the reason of the negative evaluation. The decision can be appealed according to the current procedures in the ECAAH.

15.2.- MODULAR ROUTE TO SPECIALISATION:

According to the EBVS P&P's, ECAAH may create a modular, credit-based system permitting individuals to have their credentials approved via a credit-based route.

In any case, and following EBVS rules, the following criteria must be satisfied:

1. Individuals must gain 180 credits based on the ECTS system of 60 credits equating to one academic year (see https://ec.europa.eu/education/resources-and-tools/european-credittransfer-and-accumulation-system-ects_en)

2. Each College should define the credits required and split them into theoretical credits and practical credits. A minimum level of one third of the credits must be assigned to each category.

3. Theoretical credits may include (but are not limited to): attendance at rounds and journal clubs (in person or remotely); completion of programmes to gain knowledge and skills in related speciality areas; completion of programmes to gain knowledge or skills in a specific sub-area of the speciality; completion of prior post-graduate education of a known and accepted/accredited standard.

4. Practical credits are awarded for time working in the speciality area. A proportion of these credits must be allocated to time working in the speciality area under the direct supervision of

an individual approved by the College (normally an active Diplomate of the College). The definition of direct supervision is as defined by the College but should be the same for the modular route as for residency routes. The number of credits allocated to this can be delivered flexibly but should be aligned to the outcomes expected to be achieved during the time individuals undertaking a standard residency programme spend under direct supervision.

5. Credits must be gained within an 8-year period of active credit collection. In addition, the period of active credit collection may be paused in blocks no shorter than 6 months for up to 4 years in total. These pauses may be for any reason. Individuals may register with a College at any point within the period of credit collection but once the start date is defined, even retrospectively, it cannot be changed.

6. An individual cannot start to collect credits until one-year post graduation from an EAEVE approved school or equivalent.

7. Credits may be given for completion of prior post-graduate education of a known and accepted/accredited standard. Colleges are encouraged to communicate clearly which postgraduate programs qualify for credits and how many credits they qualify for.

8. The research publication requirement and any other requirements such as teaching experience or case log submission must be the same as for individuals credentialling through the College's standard or alternate residency route.

9. Individuals gaining credentials via this route must undertake the same final assessment process as candidates gaining credentials through the standard or alternate residency route.

16.- EXAMINATIONS AND DIPLOMAS

Policies on examinations and diplomas

Qualifications to sit the diploma examination.

Before to sit an ECAAH diploma examination, the college must check that the candidate has an acceptable. For this reason, applicant's credentials should be submitted to the ECAAH for validation.

Credentials are evidence of satisfactory completion of an approved training period in a Standard or Alternative residency programmes or evidences for an exceptional Internationally recognised specialists track or modular track (when available)

In addition all categories of candidates shall meet the **requirements for publications**, which are:

- one original, aquatic animal health related, internationally peer reviewed paper of which the applicant must be the principal author and accepted by a refereed scientific journal.

- one aquatic animal health related, internationally peer reviewed case report or original paper of which the applicant is author or co-author and accepted by a refereed scientific journal.

Dissociation of publications:

In exceptional cases, disassociation of publication requirements from examination may be allowed, if recommended by the ECAAH CreC and validated by the Board. Publication requirements must be satisfied within the timespan set by the college, which may not exceed two years after successful completion of the examination. The title of diplomate or specialist may not be used until all of the requirements stated in the rules for Residency Programmes have been met.

These requirements are particularly relevant for the Residents and their Residency Supervisors, as they should consider this requirement when planning the residency activities.

Procedures on examinations and diplomas (via Residency)

Applications for credential validation should be sent to the college within 18 months of completion of the residency and at least 4 months before the scheduled examination date. For the residency track, a Residency Credential form, together with a portfolio of evidence (when necessary) of the activities taken during the residency program and also a document signed by the resident and the director of the Program/ Resident Supervisor should be sent to the ECAAH Secretary. After receiving these credentials, ECAAH Secretary will report to the applicant in less than one month regarding any forma defects, deficiencies in credentials or preliminary examination results that could prevent them from sitting the examination or being certified by the College.

After preliminary validation by the ECAAH secretary, the applicant's credentials will be sent to the CreC for evaluation. Recommendations by the Credentials Committee will be sent to the ExeC to be validated (if reports are positive). A final decision about acceptance should be taken in less than three months after the final submission of the credentials to the ECAAH and informed to the applicant. Appeals against a decision of denying acceptance of credentials are described at the end of this document.

17.-EXAMINATIONS

The ExeC will decide, according to the convenience for the ECAAH and the existence of candidates, when the examinations will take place.

As a basis, examinations will be normally held in September, but the ExeC will decide after consultation with the ExaC after assessment of all the conditions, the most convenient dates for the exams. The official dates of the exams will be published at least 6 months before with all the required information and the specific procedures, including exam fees and how to pay the fee. Candidates with validated credentials will be advised of any changes to the examination format no less than three months prior to examination.

The Certifying Examination is usually divided into three (3) sections.

-1) General Knowledge

-2) Species-Specific Knowledge

-3) Clinical cases

1) General knowledge

This section of the examination includes generic questions covering (but not restricted to) the all the disciplines and clinical aspects related to aquatic animal health. Questions can be related to basic/general knowledge (basic books), as well as advanced questions related to current knowledge (recent research or technical papers). This exam will be based in a Multiple Choice Test Examination.

2) Species-Specific knowledge

This section of the examination includes specific questions covering (but not restricted to) aquatic animal medicine in specific aquatic animal species or in specific scenarios or conditions (for example, specific rearing systems, facilities...). This exam will be based in a Multiple Choice Test Examination.

3) Clinical cases

This section of the examination tests case-based clinical problem solving. Short clinical vignettes are presented with additional clinical information that may include histopathology slides, radiographs, video clips, laboratory results, etc . Questions can be a combination of multiple choice, short answer, or short paragraph/essay in format and are designed to test clinical case management skills.

In any case, the ExamC is the responsible of the design and execution of the examination. If there are any relevant deviations or changes from this model, candidates will be informed in good time prior to the examination.

Examination acceptance policies

Before sitting an examination, the applicant's credentials must be evaluated by the CreC.

Examination policies

Examinations will be performed according to the rules of the EBVS and EBVS is actively supporting and supervising examinations. The ExaC and ExeC will contact EBVS in case on any doubts on that.

Examinations will be designed and evaluated by the ECAAH Examinations Committee (ExaC). EBVS is also actively supporting examinations that can be organised face-to-face, virtually, hybrid and with support of specific examination software.

Candidates may sit all three parts of the examination at one time or may choose to sit only one or two parts.

If all three sections are attempted, candidates that fail a single section of the Examination need only re-sit that section. Candidates that fail two or more sections must re-sit the entire Examination. If only two parts are attempted, candidates must re-sit both parts if they fail one of the two parts.

Language: The examination must be held in the English language. Non-medical dictionaries and/or interpreters may be allowed.

Confidentiality and integrity: Confidentiality must be maintained throughout the entire examination. The integrity of all parts of the examination must be always protected.

Score system and passing score marks: Candidates should be informed prior to the examination in what way the different parts and levels will be evaluated and of the pass mark, or, if this is not determined in advance, the method of setting the pass mark. To pass the Certifying Examination, the minimum passing score must be achieved for each section. Assessing scores for each section are proposed by the ExaC and approved by the ExeC.

Assessment: judgment must be incorporated into examinations by assessing not just what the candidates know, but what they would do with that knowledge.

Invigilation: examination invigilation must follow best practice and a trained, physical invigilator must be present. Apart from oral (viva voce) examinations delivered remotely using video conferencing technology, where the integrity of the examination process can be assured using a combination remotely attending examiners, supported by physical invigilators who ensure the integrity of the process, but who may be absent during the actual assessment. (See best practice guidance for delivering remote oral examinations). Invigilators can be certified ECAAH members or certified members of other EBVS colleges.

Examination results will be notified within 45 days of the date of the examination and on the same date. candidates who fail all or part of the Examination have 30 days after receiving e-mail notification of their results to request written clarification from the ECAAH Secretary. Clarification of Candidate's deficiencies will be provided within 60 days of receipt of the request.

Re-takes: candidates must be informed that they may apply to re-take all parts of the examination three times (thereby taking each part a maximum of 4 times) and that all parts of the examination must be passed within 8 years of completion of the residency programme.

Reapplication to sit the Certifying Examination

Re-taking candidates must resubmit an ECAAH Remittance fee along with the Examination Fee to retake a new examination. Candidates that fail all or a portion of the Certifying Examination, although already certified, are encouraged to remain current in their training requirements (i.e., continue working with a Program Director, maintain current Knowledge requirements, complete any new Skills or Experience Requirements, and complete ongoing Training Benchmarks).

Failure: If a candidate fails one or more parts of the examination, the ECAAH Examination Committee should contact each unsuccessful candidate and provide specific feedback in a format deemed appropriate by the College. If a candidate fails one or more parts of the examination twice, a mentorship and educational plan should be discussed with each unsuccessful candidate.

Candidates that, despite the corrective track, the examination failed 4 times, or did not obtain the Board diploma within 8 years after the end of their residency will be refused for further training and examination, unless exceptional circumstances have been approved by the college.

Mock exams: to avoid the scenario outlined in previous point, in addition to ensuring that the resident supervisor/director fulfil their responsibilities, mock examinations for residents throughout the residency will be developed to identify those that are not performing at the correct level for specialisation early and take appropriate action.

Any change in the procedure of the examination should be notified clearly to the candidates, ECAAH Board and Committees and the EBVS.

Results: The results of the examination must be announced to all candidates on the same date.

Examinations procedures.

Validated candidates should inform the ECAAH Secretary about her/his willingness to sit the exam. The Secretary will check the validation of the candidates and inform ExeC and ExaC about that.

Exams (data and other details) will be informed to the residents, diplomates and published in the ECAAH website.

Once informed, the candidates should pay the examination fees according to the instructions given in the announcement. The Treasurer will keep the Secretary informed about the payments, so the Secretary can prepare a final list of the candidates that will be distributed to the ExaC and ExeC.

The candidates will be informed by the ExaC about the details of the exam. Any specific questions about the design and development of the exam should be addressed directly to the ExaC.

The ExaC will oversee all the arrangements (place, exams, invigilators). A specific guideline with a detailed workflow of events before the exam, during the exam and after the exam will be produced and distributed amongst the people involved in the organisation of the examination.

18.- COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

COMPLAINTS AGAINST AN ECAAH DIPLOMATE

A complaint against a Diplomat may be made by the ECAAH, another College, another Diplomat, a resident, another veterinarian, or a member of the public. Complaints can be related to non-professional or unethical conduct or other action against the best interests of veterinary specialisation.

Complaints must be made firstly to the ECAAH, and the complaint will be considered by the Executive Committee/Board. The ECAAH Board will respond directly to the person issuing the complaint, with a copy of the response sent to the EBVS Secretariat. If not satisfied with the outcome, the complainant may send it to the EBVS. A tally of the number of complaints should be included in the annual report of the College.

ECAAH APPEALS POLICIES

These appeals policies have been developed according to the recommendations and guidelines indicated in the EBVS P&P's

Procedure for appeals

Appeals Committee: In case of an appeal, the ECAAH Board/Executive committee will provide for the appointment of a specific Appeals Committee. This committee will be formed by three Diplomates of the College who shall not be serving as members of the Executive Committee/Board of the College or members of the committee whose decision is potentially being questioned. These members shall have had no prior involvement with the case and have no potential conflict of interest with the Appellant or the Committee whose decision is being questioned. If necessary, it may assign a diplomate from another EBVS recognized college to the Appeals Committee.

Communication of the right of Appeal: If a College makes a decision that a resident or diplomate may wish to contest, the College shall notify the affected party (or parties) of the procedure for appealing against the adverse decision. This notification must be included with the communication that gives notice of the adverse decision itself. The Appeals Procedures must specify an address and Officer of the College to which an Appeal should be sent.

Is it possible to appeal against ECAAH adverse decisions. Adverse decisions by the College may include, but are not limited to:

a) Intrinsic ECAAH Activities

- Denial of certification of an individual.
- Temporary or permanent suspension of certification.
- Failure of an examination or a part of an examination.
- Denial of adequacy of credentials.
- Denial of approval of a residency programme.

b) Extrinsic reasons

- Failure of the ECAAH to correctly apply its own or EBVS's published rules, procedures, or criteria relevant to the decision in question.
- Clashes between published rules, procedures, or criteria not complying with the Policies and Procedures of the EBVS
- Sanction that was disproportionate to the gravity of the adverse decision against the appellant.

Procedure for initiating an Appeal.

1. Appeal submission:

The College must require an Appeal to be made in writing, including a statement of the grounds of appeal, together with any supporting reasons and documents.

2. Timelines:

The College must allow Appeals to be made within 90 days after the postmarked date of the letter communicating the relevant adverse decision (or if sent by email the date on which the email was sent). An Appeal against a decision of denying acceptance of the credentials may be submitted after a minimum of one week and a maximum of three weeks following the official announcement of the decision of denying acceptance of the Credentials of a resident to sit the examination.

3. Fees:

Submission of an appeal to the ECAAH must be accompanied by a deposit of 300 € to ensure that the expenses of the Appeal will be covered. If the Appellant does not pay his/her deposit within four weeks of receiving an invoice issued by the treasurer, then this will be deemed an admission of liability. The deposit is re-paid in full in case the appeal is upheld. In case of the appeal's rejection, all the costs relating to the appeal shall be the responsibility of the appellant with a minimum fee of 300 EUR, and with possibility for the costs to be higher, as determined by the Appeals committee and confirmed by ExeC on case-by-case basis. Any remaining deposit will be re-paid to the appellant together with an itemization of the costs retained.

4. Receipt, confirmation of grounds for appeal and Appeals committee establishment:

ECAAH must acknowledge receipt of an Appeal within 10 working days. Within 20 working days of its receipt by the College the Appeal must be considered by a nominated Executive Officer of the Board/Executive Committee, who shall have had no prior involvement with the case, and who has no potential conflict of interest with the Appellant or the Committee whose decision is being questioned. This Officer will decide whether a proper Ground for Appeal has been identified.

If a proper Ground for Appeal has been identified, the College will convene an Appeals Committee to consider the Appeal. Where the College decides that no proper Ground of Appeal has been identified by the Notice of Appeal, the College may inform the Appellant that either:

- i. It will take no further action (and explain the justification for this), or
- ii. It will consider the Notice instead as a request for an informal review of an adverse decision by the College Board on non-appealable grounds (e.g., extenuating circumstances of personal difficulty etc.).

5. Feedback to appellant:

Within 15 working days of step 4, the ECAAH will inform the Appellant whether the Notice of Appeal has been accepted as raising an arguable Ground of Appeal, and, if so, of the proposed membership of the Appeals Committee that will consider the Appeal.

6. Objections to the composition of the Committee:

After the feedback and within 5 working days, the Appellant can raise concerns and with or object to the membership of the Appeals Committee and provide to the ECAAH Board a reasonable procedure by which any such concerns or objections are considered and responded to.

7. Appointment of the Committee: Within 5 working days of the appointment of the

Appeals Committee, all the papers relating to the dispute shall be forwarded by the Officer of the College to whom the Appeal was sent to the members of the Appeals Committee.

8. Convening the committee:

The procedure for convening an Appeals Committee to consider the Appeal must be completed no later than 30 days after the date the College has informed the Appellant of the proposed membership of the Appeals Committee.

Procedure for an Appeal Process

1. Information: The Appeals Committee request and is given access to information relevant to its consideration of the Appeal from any relevant party.

2. Hearing: The Appeals Committee must carefully evaluate the need for a hearing. When an Appeals Committee decides not to hold a hearing in an Appeal regarding an allegation of impropriety against a candidate (or in other matters of similar gravity), reasons for that decision must be given. When a hearing is held, attendees must be given sufficient choice of dates/times to allow them to attend. A hearing must be attended by at least three members of the Appeals Committee. Neither party may be represented by legal counsel, although the provisions of the law in the country where the College is registered must be taken into consideration. Hearings will be conducted in English. The Appellant may be accompanied by an individual (“representative”), who may assist them to present the appeal. The “representative” will not be allowed to participate in answering specific questions but, at the discretion of the Chairperson, may be allowed to provide necessary language translations and may, at the end, be allowed to make a statement on behalf of the Appellant.

4. Minutes and recordings: A transcript or detailed minutes of the meeting will be kept. An electronic recording may be made with the prior consent of all parties. The minutes and, if applicable, the electronic recording, shall be made available to the meeting’s participants on request.

Changes in appeals procedures will be reported to the EBVS as part of the Annual Report

19.- ECAAH QUALITY ASSURANCE

Introduction

The mission of the College is to contribute significantly to the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of European Veterinary Specialists in Aquatic Animal Health across all European countries at the highest possible level to ensure that improved optimal veterinary medical services will be provided to the public.

In accordance with its objective to function as an Organisation developing and enhancing standards and guidelines on quality assurance in the area of Aquatic Animal Health, and to maintain and develop co-operation with other appropriate European stakeholder organisations, ECAAH is committed to a continuing cooperation with partner organisations in Europe and beyond. These mainly include the other EBVS recognised Colleges, the respective Associations in Europe and specialist Colleges in other parts of the world (e.g., North America, and Australasia).

Quality assurance policies

Towards achieving this goal, ECAAH imposes special training beyond the professional veterinary degree to enhance the ability of candidates to meet certification requirements and to update the competence of specialists, and has:

1. Established a policy and associated formal mechanisms for the approval, periodic review, and monitoring for the assurance of the standards and quality of the programmes and awards is offering.
2. Established a system of collection, analysis, and use of up to date, impartial and objective, relevant information for the effective management of the training programmes and other activities of the College, to be regularly submitted to the EBVS.
3. Established a clear policy and the procedures, including a re-evaluation form, for certification of the Diplomates for membership of the Colleges every five years.
4. Conflict of interest avoidance mechanisms are in place on all levels, e.g., applications for enrolment as a resident, approval of residency programmes, approval of credentials, examinations, appeals procedures and so on.
6. established a policy and the procedures for complaints or appeals, and disciplinary actions against Diplomates or Residents/Candidates.
7. Moreover, working under the umbrella of the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation, ECAAH also contributes to its goals by ensuring that.
8. The College commits itself to the development of a culture, which recognises the importance of quality, and quality assurance, in its activities, and to achieve this, it develops and implement a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality.
9. The interests of society and veterinary profession in the quality and standards of specialist education and training are safeguarded.
10. Any specified experience requirement is clearly defined, relevant to the objectives of the speciality, and amenable to evaluation.
11. A strategic plan must be developed every ten years.

12. The strategy, constitution/bylaws, policy and procedures, and all major documents of the College are publicly available.

13. Residents are assessed using published criteria, regulations and procedures which are applied consistently.

14. Staff involved with the training of residents are qualified and competent to do so.

15. The resources available for the support of resident learning are adequate and appropriate for each programme offered.

Policy in Accountability procedures

ECAAH has in place its own procedures which include the following:

i. A published policy for the assurance of the quality of the agency itself, made available on its website.

ii. Documentation which demonstrates that:

a. The processes and results reflect its mission and goals of quality assurance.

b. Enforces, a no-conflict-of-interest mechanism in its own activities or in the activities of its Diplomates and Residents/Candidates.

c. ECAAH has reliable mechanisms that ensure the quality of any of its activities and material produced.

Glossary

Applicant

An applicant is an individual who wishes to be accepted onto a standard or alternative track Residency Training program. An applicant must fulfil the requirements for application if they are to be successful in becoming a Resident. They remain an Applicant until both they as an individual and their Program has been approved by the Education Committee.

Resident

Unless otherwise specified, use of the term 'Resident' in this document refers to both Residents in a Standard or an Alternative track program. Residents are, by definition, applicants that have been accepted into an approved Residency Training Program by a Program Director and have been approved by the ECAAH. The ECAAH reserves the right to withdraw Resident privileges from any Resident who, upon review and request for corrective action, continues to fail to meet the requirements outlined in this document. A Resident is active if they are making satisfactory progress toward the completion of the Residency Requirements. To remain active a Resident must submit Annual Progress Reports.

Candidate

A Candidate is a resident who has had their Credentials (including Final Progress Report) accepted by the CreC and is thus permitted to sit the next examination. Individuals are then termed a Candidate until they have passed the Certifying Examination and been granted Diplomate status by the ECAAH Executive Committee.

Program Director

A Program Director must be a Diplomate of the ECAAH and is the College's representative within a Residency Training Program. The Program Director has a trusted responsibility to represent the interests of the ECAAH within the Residency Training Program.

Resident Supervisor

Each Resident must be assigned a Supervisor by the Residency Program Director prior to the start of the Residency Training Program. The Residency Program Director and Supervisor may be the same individual. The Supervisor must be an ECAAH Diplomate and must be a member in good standing with the ECAAH for the duration of a Resident's training. Resident Supervisors must be legally authorized and permitted by the Residency Training Facility to practice in the facility where supervision will take place. The Resident Supervisor must be available to the Resident on a continual basis and is responsible for the administration and evaluation of the specific Residency Programme requirements for the Resident and ensuring that the Resident is making adequate progress in the programme. A Supervisor can have a maximum of three (3) Residents at any time. This does not include Candidates who have completed their Residency Training Programme but have not yet achieved Diplomate status and continue to work with their Mentor until they sit the Certifying Examination.

Annex 1

Profiles of the ECAAH Residency Programs on Aquatic Animal Health (AAH)

I. Definition:

An AAH Residency Program is a training program performed by a ECAAH resident, allowing a graduate veterinarian to acquire in-depth knowledge of AAH and its supporting disciplines under the supervision and guidance of a Diplomate or diplomates of the ECAAH.

II a. General objectives of the Training Program:

- A. To promote aptitude and clinical proficiency in AAH.
- B. To instruct the resident in the science and practice of AAH and its supporting disciplines.
- C. To provide the resident with the opportunity to pursue career goals in teaching, research, clinical service, and/or specialty practice.

II b. Detailed objectives of the AAH Training Program.

- A. Knowledge and skills concerning professional contacts and transfer of knowledge.

The specialists should be able to:

- express thoughts clearly, in oral as well in written form in the English language
- approach problems in an analytic, scientific way to find solutions and be able to assign priorities for these
- organize work efficiently
- make effective use of the available literature and find required information quickly
- develop scientific activities to contribute to the quality of the Specialty

- B. General knowledge and skills concerning the specialty.

The specialist shall:

- be able to assess the significance of health matters for individual or stocks of aquatic animals held in captivity, farmed or in the wild groups of animals under the specific conditions under which they are held and the consequences for the fish, environment and people involved in the management or supervision of these animals.
- be acquainted with the main current theories, principles, and problems of the specialty
- maintain up to date knowledge through professional and academic activities, literature and media releases.
- be acquainted with the structures, objectives, approaches, and problems of the veterinary profession and specifically with regard to the specialty
- be acquainted with the social role of the specialty
- conform to modern standards of skills and equipment.

C. Knowledge and skills concerned with obtaining help for problems that lie outside the specialty and/or facilities.

The specialist shall:

- keep abreast of new developments in the specialty and become familiar with new methods, before applying these in practice
- understand the limitations of the specialty
- understand the possibilities that other specialties have to offer
- be familiar with the potential of multidisciplinary co-operation.

D. Knowledge and skills concerned with working as a professional specialist.

A specialist should have extensive practical experience within the specialty. Through experience, the specialist should have developed the self-confidence, self-criticism and sense of responsibility that are essential for the practice of the specialty.

E-1. Knowledge and skills concerned with the general practice AAH/medicine.

A specialist in AAH shall be able to handle emergencies in aquaculture aquatic animals as pets and in other situations.

E-2. Knowledge and skills concerned with the practice of AAH.

A specialist in AAH:

- must have a working knowledge of those aspects of AAH medicine and management / husbandry which are applicable to the specialty
- must be acquainted with the most common aquatic animal diseases
- should be able to perform diagnostic and therapeutic procedures
- should be able to take actions in these species based on knowledge of legislation, preventive medicine, zoonoses, nutrition and husbandry

F. Specific knowledge and skills regarding practicing the specialty of AAH.

Areas and level of knowledge:

-Aquatic Environment and Life Support Systems

Water quality includes all the physical, chemical, and biological characteristics of water that regulates its suitability for the health of aquatic organisms and their ecosystem. Poor or inadequate water quality is often associated to the cause of morbidity and mortality in aquatic animals. Knowledge, skills, and experience in this subject matter are critical for practicing aquatic veterinary medicine. Given the intimate relationship that aquatic organisms have with the surrounding environment, a candidate should demonstrate thorough understanding of this environment.

Examples are:

- Chemical stressors and their effect on aquatic animal health/environment.
- Common chemical water quality abnormalities.

- Techniques for the assessment/monitoring of water quality parameters.
- Interpretation of water quality parameters results.
- Appropriate treatment of water quality abnormalities.
- Toxins and pollutants.
- Effects of medications and therapeutics on water quality.
- Physical stressors in the aquatic environment and their effect on aquatic animal health/environment. Including: stocking density, improper husbandry/life-support system, tank/pond design, inter/intra-species aggression, handling, and transport.
- Biological stressors in the aquatic environment and their effects on aquatic animal health.
- Species differences regarding their water quality requirements.
- Interaction of various species in the aquatic ecosystem and its effect on aquatic animal health.
- Environmental factors that affect the development of disease.

Taxonomy, Anatomy and Physiology

Candidate should demonstrate knowledge, skills, and experience necessary for the practice of aquatic veterinary medicine and surgery of the basic anatomy and physiology of the most relevant aquatic animal taxa.

Examples are:

- Taxonomic relationship of aquatic Phyla
- Scientific and common names of significant aquatic animal species

Anatomy and physiology of organ systems including:

Musculoskeletal and integumentary systems (skin and muscle).

Digestive (gastrointestinal system) and nutritional physiology.

Circulatory and Respiratory systems.

Osmoregulation and waste excretion.

Reproductive and Endocrine systems.

Immune system.

Nervous system and sense organs.

Husbandry and Industries

Candidates should demonstrate an understanding of the main key aquatic farming industry sectors, economics, health issues and husbandry practices associated with the maintenance of aquatic animals (e.g., aquaculture, ornamental pet trade, public aquaria exhibits) and with wild harvest of aquatic animals for food and pets.

Examples are:

- Aquaculture Industry – Fish as food sector and Ornamental sector.
- Fisheries and aquatic animal resource management.
- Public Aquaria and Zoo Aquatic Animal Exhibition.
- Conservation/Resource management captive breeding programs.
- Animal Handling Techniques.
- Animal Holding System Design and General Management.
- Collection, Transport, Acclimation.

CLINICAL SKILLS TO BE DEVELOPPED

- Pathobiology and Epidemiology of Aquatic Animal Diseases

Candidates should demonstrate an understanding of environmental conditions and pathogens that cause diseases in aquatic animals, the pathological changes and the clinical signs of important aquatic animal diseases in order to determine the cause of the disease and the course of action or treatment and assess the risk of transmission.

Examples are:

- Infectious and parasitic diseases disease identification, diagnostic prevention, control & treatment.
- Non-infectious diseases (Nutritional deficiencies, Water quality/temperature abnormality, aquatic toxicology, traumatic injuries, genetic disorders, techno pathologies, neoplasia).

Candidates should demonstrate a good understanding of the diagnostic procedures and treatments, including fundamental theoretical knowledge, as well as practical experience with clinical and laboratory disease diagnosis and treatment of infectious diseases and pathological conditions.

Examples are:

- Principles of Laboratory Diagnosis:

Sample collection for laboratory examination, proper shipment of samples for diagnostic purposes, principles of sample custody, Quality Assurance and Quality Control (QA and QC), disease diagnosis at laboratory level

- Principles of Prophylaxis and Disease Control.
- Therapeutics, Biologics, Vaccines, and other treatment approaches.

- Clinical Veterinary Experience and Client Communications.

Candidate should demonstrate competency with basic clinical procedures, diagnostic tools and techniques, and with client or industry communication.

Examples are:

- Clinical Examination, including taking a case history adapted to aquatic animals (e.g., include water quality), physical examination techniques, blood and other biological sample collection and analysis, examination of cytology & biopsy wet mounts, post-mortem examination & necropsies.
- Sedation/Anaesthesia.
- Basic imaging techniques.
- Basic surgical procedures.
- Common therapeutic approaches.
- General Case management.
- Public Health, Zoonotic and Seafood Safety.

Candidates should demonstrate knowledge of aquatic zoonotic diseases pertinent to their field of practice. Candidates should also demonstrate understanding of the role of the veterinarian in public health through education and knowledge of the food-chain and seafood safety methodology.

Examples are:

- The aetiology, transmission, treatment, and control of aquatic zoonotic diseases.
- Benefits and disadvantages of aquatic animals in public health.
- Food-chain practices and legislation pertinent to their locality (including methods used to ensure product safety from the source to the consumer).

- Legislation, Regulations, and Policies

Candidates should demonstrate a good understanding of the laws, regulations and policies that directly impact the practice of aquatic veterinary medicine in areas relevant to the candidate.

Examples are:

- International bodies and guidance, codes or standards that address aquatic animal health and welfare, public health, and seafood safety.
- National and state/provincial/local governmental authorities responsible for, and statutory and non-statutory legislation, regulations and/or policies.
- National and state/provincial/local veterinary organizations, their policies and codes or principles of veterinary medical ethics.
- Development of a regional, national, or international health plan that includes list of reportable/notifiable diseases, certification, zoning, risk assessment, and quarantine.

- Principles of Aquatic Animal Welfare

Candidates should demonstrate knowledge of current issues related to aquatic animal welfare and an ability to assess the welfare status of key aquatic species.

Examples are:

- General topics in aquatic animal welfare that are of concern to aquaculture industry, ornamental industry and hobbyists, research, resource management, zoos, and aquariums.
 - Key legislation, regulations, policies, and professional societies' statements about aquatic animal welfare.
 - Humane handling and euthanasia methods of aquatic animal species associated with the fishing industry, wildlife, aquaculture, ornamental trade, zoos, public aquaria and research.
- Technical experience

The AAH specialist should have had extensive practical experience with a wide variety of aquatic species.

The AAH specialist must be competent in the various skills associated with the field, including history taking, catching, and handling animals and clinical examination of individual organisms and group of animals, blood sampling, vaccination and other methods (including tube-feeding) and in addition anaesthetic and surgical procedures.

These specifications are representative and are to be adapted if necessary, by the Education Committee of the College of AAH to recent developments.

Appendix:

TEMPLATES OF:

- **APPLICATIONS STANDARD TRAINING CENTERS FORMS**
- **APPLICATION STANDARD TRAINING PROGRAM FORMS**
- **APPLICATION ALTERNATIVE TRAINING PROGRAM FORMS**
- **RECERTIFICATION FORM**
- **REGISTRATION FORM FOR RESIDENTS**
- **ANNUAL REPORT RESIDENTS FORM**